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Message Text

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16
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 DHA-02 CU-02 AID-05 /039 W
---------- 030581
R 082011Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1270

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ARA/LA/MRSD O'GRADY PASS SUBSTANCE TO AIFLD

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, SHUM, PINT, PINS, CI
SUBJECT: GOC LABOR POLICIES - AIFLD

REF: SANTIAGO 7847

1. SUMMARY: THE AMBASSADOR MET WITH MINISTER OF LABOR WHO SAID THAT CONTINUATION OF AIFLD PROGRAMS WAS BENEFICIAL TO CHILE. THE GOC, HOWEVER, WANTED AIFLD TO EXPAND ITS OPERATIONS TO INCLUDE A BROADER CROSS SECTION OF CHILEAN LABOR LEADERS. AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT ON LABOR MATTERS WOULD BE MADE BY THE GOC ON SEPTEMBER 11. END SUMMARY.

2. THE AMBASSADOR MET WITH MINISTER OF LABOR SERGIO FERNANDEZ ON SEPTEMBER 1 TO INTRODUCE LABATT. MINISTER OF LABOR CONFIRMED THAT JORGE JANA REYES (REFTEL) WOULD BE RELEASED SOON BECAUSE OF THE EMBASSY'S INTEREST.

3. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE HOPED THAT AIFLD WOULD CONTINUE TO ENJOY FREEDOM TO CONDUCT LABOR SEMINARS THROUGHOUT CHILE. MINISTER REPLIED THAT AIFLD WAS IMPORTANT TO CHILE NOT ONLY FOR ITS INSTRUCTIONAL SEMINARS BUT ALSO AS A DEMONSTRATION TO THE WORLD THAT CHILE PERMITTED THE FREE EXERCISE OF TRADE UNION PROGRAMS. THE GOC DID HAVE SOME PROBLEMS WITH AIFLD: FIRST, HE CONTENDED THAT AIFLD WAS IDENTIFIED WITH ONE GROUP
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OF TRADE UNION LEADERS (I.E., THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS).

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OTHER LEADERS HAD TO GO THROUGH THESE LEADERS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN COURSES, SEMINARS AND TRAVEL GRANTS. SECOND, HE SAID THAT THE CLOSING AND GRADUATION CEREMONIES ARE USED TO GIVE POLITICAL SPEECHES. FINALLY, HE ALLEGED THAT THE AIFLD PROGRAMS WERE GIVEN EXCLUSIVELY TO MEMBERS OF ONE POLITICAL PARTY.

4. MINISTER CONCLUDED IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION THAT PRESIDENT PINOCHET WOULD MAKE A MAJOR STATEMENT ON LABOR AT THE SEPTEMBER 11 CELEBRATION OF THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE MILITARY COUP. HE DID NOT ELABORATE.

5. AMBASSADOR THANKED THE MINISTER FOR HIS ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING THE PROMISED RELEASE OF JORGE JANA. HE THEN EMPHASIZED THAT AIFLD DID NOT DEAL EXCLUSIVELY WITH ANY GROUP OF LABOR LEADERS OR TAKE ANY COGNIZANCE WHATSOEVER OF THE POLITICAL AFFILIATION OF TRADE UNIONISTS WHO ATTENDED ITS COURSES. ON THE QUESTION OF THE USE OF THE CLOSING CEREMONIES OF SEMINARS FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES, THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT AIFLD COULD NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT OTHERS SAID, NOR COULD IT DETERMINE WHOM THE LOCAL UNIONS SHOULD INVITE TO SUCH CEREMONIES. HE NOTED THAT LOCAL AUTHORITIES ARE CUSTOMARILY INVITED AND ATTEND.

6. COMMENT: THE CURRENT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AIFLD AND THE GOC INVOLVES CERTAIN DILEMMAS FOR BOTH OF THEM. IN THE TRADITION OF U.S. LABOR, AIFLD NECESSARY ASSERTS ITS ENTIRELY NON-POLITICAL CHARACTER AND ITS INTEREST EXCLUSIVELY IN TRADE UNION EDUCATION. AT THE SAME TIME, IN TERMS OF SIMILARITIES OF APPROACH AND THE CONCURRENCE OF POLITICAL IDEAS, COOPERATION IS MORE EASY AND NATURAL WITH LABOR OFFICIALS OF DEMOCRATIC BACKGROUND AND AFFILIATIONS THAN WITH STRONG JUNTA SUPPORTERS. ON THE GOVERNMENT SIDE, THERE IS FULL RECOGNITIION OF THE POLITICAL COST INVOLVED IN CURBING OR ENDING AIFLD PROGRAMS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOVERNMENT FEELS IT MUST INSIST THAT AIFLD PROGRAMS NOT BE CHANNELED DISPROPORTIONATELY TO OPPOSITION UNIONS, AND, MORE IMPORTANT, THAT THEY NOT STIMULATE OR CONTRIBUTE TO CONTROVERSY OVER GOVERNMENT LABOR POLICIES. WE WOULD THEREFORE EXPECT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AIFLD AND THE GOVERNMENT TO REMAIN AN UNEASY ONE. IT IS BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NO MEANS CLEAR THAT THE JUNTA WILL CONTINUE TO EXERCISE THE RESTRAINT NECESSARY TO PROVIDE AIFLD WITH THE NECESSARY FREEDOM OF ACTION TO MAKE CONTINUATION OF ITS PROGRAM WORTHWHILE.

7. FOR THE TIME BEING, MINISTER FERNANDEZ HAS ADOPTED AN ACCOMMODATING ATTITUDE. AIFLD SEMINARS ARE GOING FORWARD WITHOUT OBSTRUCTION. AIFLD IS AWARE OF THE NEED TO OFFER

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ITS SERVICES TO ALL UNIONS REQUESTING THEM. WE WILL WATCH
CAREFULLY AS ITS PROGRAM DEVELOPS.
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